

Message Text

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ACTION LAB-04

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SUBJ: ILO ACTIVITIES IN AFGHANISTAN

REF: STATE 3255

1. UNDP FUNDS TWO PROJECTS IN AFGHANISTAN FOR WHICH ILO IS EXECUTIVE AGENCY. IN ADDITION TO (USUALLY) FIVE PEOPLE ASSOCIATED WITH THESE PROJECTS, ONE ILO EMPLOYEE, AN INDIAN NATIONAL, IS SECONDED TO A UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT PROJECT AT AFGHAN MINISTRY OF PLANNING. PROJECT IS DESIGNED TO STRENGTHEN GOVT OF AFGHANISTAN (GOA) PLANNING CAPABILITY AND ILO PERSON INVOLVED IS MANPOWER PLANNING EXPERT.

2. FIRST OF ILO'S TWO PROJECTS IS "MANAGEMENT TRAINING CENTER PROGRAM" ESTABLISHED HERE ABOUT THREE AND A HALF YEARS AGO. ITS OBJECTIVE IS TO CREATE A CADRE OF AFGHAN MANAGERS WHO CAN ASSIST IN STRENGTHENING THE ORGANIZATION OF GOVT INDUSTRIES. ITS PRINCIPAL AREA OF INVOLVEMENT HAS BEEN GOA-OWNED "JANGALAK" FACTORY WHERE A LARGE VARIETY OF SMALL MANUFACTURING TAKES PLACE. PROJECT HAS ALSO GIVEN ADVICE TO TWO SMALLER AFGHAN GOVT ENTERPRISES. PERSONS ASSOCIATED WITH PROJECT ADMIT FRANKLY THAT BRINGING PRINCIPLES OF MODERN MANAGEMENT TO AFGHAN GOVT INDUSTRY IS A TOUGH PROSPECT SINCE

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PROFITABLE AND RATIONAL OPERATION IS FOR GOA LESS IMPORTANT THAN POLITICAL POLICY AND AFGHAN RULES OF PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT. ORGANIZATION IS PURELY GOVT, THERE BEING NO EMPLOYER OR WORKER ORGANIZATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN. ILO PERSONNEL ASSIGNED HAVE BEEN GENERALLY COMPETENT, MISSION-ORIENTED AND WELL PREPARED FOR THEIR WORK. ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THEY WORK, AS STATED PREVIOUSLY, IS HOWEVER EXTREMELY DIFFICULT. THIS

WAS ESPECIALLY TRUE UNTIL SEPTEMBER 27, 1975, WHEN ABDUL TAWAB ASEFI TOOK CHARGE AS MINISTER OF MINES AND INDUSTRIES. AFGHAN GOVT BUDGETING AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM ARE INCAPABLE OF PROVIDING FULL SUPPORT TO THIS KIND OF PROJECT, ALTHOUGH IN NET IT APPEARS THAT OFFICIAL AFGHAN SUPPORT HAS BEEN AS FORTHCOMING AS IN MOST OTHER DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECTS. THIS PROJECT HAS IN ITS OWN TERMS BEEN "SUCCESSFUL", PARTICULARLY INSOFAR AS IT IS VIEWED AS A PILOT EFFORT DESIGNED TO ORGANIZE A MODERN MANAGEMENT SYSTEM WHERE NONE EXISTED BEFORE.

3. SECOND ILO PROGRAM HERE IS "LABOR LAW PROJECT". PROJECT HAS BEEN IN PROGRESS APPROXIMATELY ONE AND ONE-HALF YEARS. A COMPREHENSIVE LABOR LAW HAS BEEN WRITTEN IN COOPERATION WITH THE LABOR DIVISION OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND INDUSTRIES (AFGHANISTAN'S ONLY "OFFICE OF LABOR"), BUT NOT YET PUBLISHED BY AFGHAN GOVT. THE TWO SPECIALISTS WORKING ON THE PROJECT, ASSISTED FROM TIME TO TIME BY TDY CONSULTANTS (AN EXAMPLE IS A JOB CLASSIFICATION SPECIALIST WHO RECENTLY VISITED AFGHANISTAN) ARE NOW WORKING ON MORE DETAILED RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING LABOR LAW ALREADY PROPOSED. ONCE AGAIN THIS WORK IS A PIONEER EFFORT AND ITS DEGREE OF SUCCESS MUST BE JUDGED IN THESE TERMS. GOA IS USUALLY SLOW TO ADEOP AND PUBLISH NEW REGULATIONS, AND IT MAY BE LONG BEFORE THE NEW LABOR LAW AND SUPPORTING PROCEDURES ARE DECREED. THIS DOES NOT DETRACT FROM ILO'S LANDMARK EFFORTS.

4. UNDP OFFICIALS ARE CURRENTLY CONSIDERING POSIBILITY THAT IN ABOUT TWO YEARS ILO MIGHT BE ASKED TO SPONSOR A "RURAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DEVELOPMENT CENTER" IN DISTANT AFGHAN PROVINCE OF BADA KHSHAN. PROJECT WOULD INVOLVE TRAINING SMALL BUSINESS MANAGERS FOR HANDICRAFTS INDUSTRY, AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES, ETC. THIS PROJECT IS STILL ON THE DRAWING BOARD, BUT UNDP OFFICIALS REPORT THAT DUTCH GOVT HAS PROMISED \$200,000 THIS YEAR AND THAT SAME AMOUNT EARMARKED FOR THIS PURPOSE IN 1978. ELIOT

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